BEYOND THE HILLS OF DREAM

W. W. CAMPBELL

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Beyond the Hills of Dream

By W. Wilfred Campbell

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To the Right Honourable Sir Wilfrid Laurier, *P. C., G. C. M. G., by whose appreciation, sympathy, and friendship the author has been aided and encouraged, this volume is affectionately dedicated.*

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Beyond the Hills of Dream

OVER the mountains of sleep, my Love,
Over the hills of dream,
Beyond the walls of care and fate,
Where the loves and memories teem;
We come to a world of fancy free,
Where hearts forget to weep; —
Over the mountains of dream, my Love,
Over the hills of sleep.

Over the hills of care, my Love,
Over the mountains of dread,
We come to a valley glad and vast,
Where we meet the long-lost dead:
And there the gods in splendor dwell,
In a land where all is fair,
Over the mountains of dread, my Love,
Over the hills of care.

Over the mountains of dream, my Love,
Over the hills of sleep; —
Could we but come to that heart's desire,
Where the harvests of fancy reap,

Then we would know the old joys and hopes,
The longings of youth's bright gleam,
Over the mountains of sleep, my Love,
Over the hills of dream.

Yea, there the sweet old years have rest,
And there my heart would be,
Amid the glad ones loved of yore,
At the sign of the Fancy Free;
And there the old lips would repeat
Earth's memories o'er and o'er,
Over the mountains of might-have-been,
Over the hills of yore.

Unto that valley of dreams, my Love,
If we could only go,
Beyond the mountains of heart's despair,
The hills of winter and snow,
Then we would come to those happy isles,
Those shores of blossom and wing,
Over the mountains of waiting, my Love,
Over the hills of spring.

And there where the woods are scarlet and gold,
And the apples are red on the tree,
The heart of Autumn is never old
In that country where we would be.

And how would we come to that land, my Love?
Follow the midnight stars,
That swim and gleam in a milk-white stream,
Over the night's white bars.

Or follow the trail of the sunset red
That beacons the dying deeps
Of day's wild borders down the edge
Of silence, where evening sleeps;
Or take the road that the morning wakes,
When he whitens his first rosebeam,
Over the mountains of glory, my Love,
Over the hills of dream.

Sometime, sometime, we will go, my Love,
When winter loosens to spring,
And all the spirits of Joy are ajog,
After the wild-bird's wing, —
When winter and sorrow have opened their doors
To set love's prisoners free,
Over the mountains of woe, my Love,
Over the hills of dree.

And when we reach there we will know
The faces we knew of yore,
The lips that kissed, the hands that clasped,
When memory loosens her store,

And we will drink to the long dead years,
In that inn of the golden gleam,
Over the mountains of sleep, my Love,
Over the hills of dream.

And all the joys we missed, my Love,
And all the hopes we knew,
The dreams of life we dreamed in vain,
When youth's red blossoms blew;
And all the hearts that throbbed for us,
In the past so sunny and fair,
We will meet and greet in that golden land,
Over the hills of care.

Over the mountains of sleep, my Love,
Over the hills of dream,
Beyond the walls of care and fate,
Where the loves and memories teem,
We come to a land of fancy free,
Where hearts forget to weep,
Over the mountains of dream, my Love,
Over the hills of sleep.

Morning

WHEN I behold how out of ruined night
Filled with all weirds of haunted ancientness,
And dreams and phantasies of pale distress,
Is builded, beam by beam, the splendid light,
The opalescent glory, gem bedight,
Of dew-emblazoned morning; when I know
Such wondrous hopes, such luminous beauties grow
From out earth's shades of sadness and affright;

O, then, my heart, amid thy questioning fear,
Dost thou not whisper: "He who buildeth thus
From wrecks of dark such wonders at his will,
Can re-create from out death's night for us
The marvels of a morning gladder still
Than ever trembled into beauty here?"

Out of Pompeii

SHE lay, face downward, on her bended arm,
In this her new, sweet dream of human bliss,
Her heart within her fearful, fluttering, warm,
Her lips yet pained with love's first timorous kiss.
She did not note the darkening afternoon,
She did not mark the lowering of the sky
O'er that great city. Earth had given its boon
Unto her lips, love touched her and passed by.

In one dread moment all the sky grew dark,
The hideous rain, the panic, the red rout,
Where love lost love, and all the world might mark
The city overwhelmèd, blotted out
Without one cry, so quick oblivion came,
And life passed to the black where all forget;
But she — we know not of her house or name —
In love's sweet musings doth lie dreaming yet.

The dread hell passed, the ruined world grew still,
And the great city passed to nothingness:

The ages went and mankind worked its will.
  Then men stood still amid the centuries' press,
And in the ash-hid ruins opened bare,
  As she lay down in her shamed loveliness,
Sculptured and frozen, late they found her there,
  Image of love 'mid all that hideousness.

Her head, face downward, on her bended arm,
  Her single robe that showed her shapely form,
Her wondrous fate love keeps divinely warm
  Over the centuries, past the slaying storm.
The heart can read in writings time hath left,
  That linger still through death's oblivion;
And in this waste of life and light bereft,
  She brings again a beauty that had gone.

And if there be a day when all shall wake,
  As dreams the hoping, doubting human heart,
The dim forgetfulness of death will break
  For her as one who sleeps with lips apart;
And did God call her suddenly, I know
  She 'd wake as morning wakened by the thrush,
Feel that red kiss across the centuries glow,
  And make all heaven rosier by her blush.

Morning on the Shore

THE lake is blue with morning; and the sky
Sweet, clear, and burnished as an orient pearl.
High in its vastness scream and skim and whirl
White gull-flocks where the gleaming beaches die
Into dim distance, where great marshes lie.
Far in ashore the woods are warm with dreams,
The dew-wet road in ruddy sunlight gleams,
The sweet, cool earth, the clear blue heaven on high.

Across the morn a carolling school-boy goes,
Filling the world with youth to heaven's stair;
Some chattering squirrel answers from his tree;
But down beyond the headland, where ice-floes
Are great in winter, pleading in mute prayer,
A dead, drowned face stares up immutably.

Bereavement of the Fields

IN MEMORY OF ARCHIBALD LAMPMAN, WHO DIED FEBRUARY 10, 1899

SOFT fall the February snows, and soft
Falls on my heart the snow of wintry pain;
For never more, by wood or field or croft,
Will he we knew walk with his loved again;
No more, with eyes adream and soul aloft,
In those high moods where love and beauty reign,
Greet his familiar fields, his skies without a stain.

Soft fall the February snows, and deep,
Like downy pinions from the moulting breast
Of all the mothering sky, round his hushed sleep,
Flutter a million loves upon his rest,
Where once his well-loved flowers were fain to peep,
With adder-tongue and waxen petals prest,
In young spring evenings reddening down the west.

Soft fall the February snows, and hushed
Seems life's loud action, all its strife removed,

Afar, remote, where grief itself seems crushed,
And even hope and sorrow are reproved;
For he whose cheek erstwhile with hope was flushed,
And by the gentle haunts of being moved,
Hath gone the way of all he dreamed and loved.

Soft fall the February snows, and lost,
This tender spirit gone with scarce a tear,
Ere, loosened from the dungeons of the frost,
Wakens with yearnings new the enfranchised year,
Late winter-wizened, gloomed, and tempest-tost;
And Hesper's gentle, delicate veils appear,
When dream anew the days of hope and fear.

And Mother Nature, she whose heart is fain,
Yea, she who grieves not, neither faints nor fails,
Building the seasons, she will bring again
March with rudening madness of wild gales,
April and her wraiths of tender rain,
And all he loved, — this soul whom memory veils,
Beyond the burden of our strife and pain.

Not his to wake the strident note of song,
Nor pierce the deep recesses of the heart,
Those tragic wells, remote, of might and wrong;
But rather, with those gentler souls apart,

He dreamed like his own summer days along,
Filled with the beauty born of his own heart,
Sufficient in the sweetness of his song.

Outside this prison-house of all our tears,
Enfranchised from our sorrow and our wrong,
Beyond the failure of our days and years,
Beyond the burden of our saddest song,
He moves with those whose music filled his ears,
And claimed his gentle spirit from the throng, —
Wordsworth, Arnold, Keats, high masters of his song.

Like some rare Pan of those old Grecian days,
Here in our hours of deeper stress reborn,
Unfortunate thrown upon life's evil ways,
His inward ear heard ever that satyr horn
From Nature's lips reverberate night and morn,
And fled from men and all their troubled maze,
Standing apart, with sad, incurious gaze.

And now, untimely cut, like some sweet flower
Plucked in the early summer of its prime,
Before it reached the fulness of its dower,
He withers in the morning of our time;
Leaving behind him, like a summer shower,

A fragrance of earth's beauty, and the chime
Of gentle and imperishable rhyme.

Songs in our ears of winds and flowers and buds
And gentle loves and tender memories
Of Nature's sweetest aspects, her pure moods,
Wrought from the inward truth of intimate eyes
And delicate ears of him who harks and broods,
And, nightly pondering, daily grows more wise,
And dreams and sees in mighty solitudes.

Soft fall the February snows, and soft
He sleeps in peace upon the breast of her
He loved the truest; where, by wood and croft,
The wintry silence folds in fleecy blur
About his silence, while in glooms aloft
The mighty forest fathers, without stir,
Guard well the rest of him, their rare sweet wor-
shipper.

A Wood Lyric

INTO the stilly woods I go,
Where the shades are deep and the wind-flowers blow,
And the hours are dreamy and lone and long,
And the power of silence is greater than song.
Into the stilly woods I go,
Where the leaves are cool and the wind-flowers blow.

When I go into the stilly woods,
And know all the flowers in their sweet, shy hoods,
The tender leaves in their shimmer and sheen
Of darkling shadow, diaphanous green,
In those haunted halls where my footstep falls,
Like one who enters cathedral walls,
A spirit of beauty floods over me,
As over a swimmer the waves of the sea,
That strengthens and glories, refreshens and fills,
Till all mine inner heart wakens and thrills
With a new and a glad and a sweet delight,
And a sense of the infinite out of sight,
Of the great unknown that we may not know,

But only feel with an inward glow
When into the great, glad woods we go.

O life-worn brothers, come with me
Into the wood's hushed sanctity,
Where the great, cool branches are heavy with June,
And the voices of summer are strung in tune;
Come with me, O heart outworn,
Or spirit whom life's brute-struggles have torn,
Come, tired and broken and wounded feet,
Where the walls are greening, the floors are sweet,
The roofs are breathing and heaven's airs meet.

Come, wash earth's grievings from out of the face,
The tear and the sneer and the warfare's trace,
Come where the bells of the forest are ringing,
Come where the oriole's nest is swinging,
Where the brooks are foaming in amber pools,
The mornings are still and the noonday cools.
Cast off earth's sorrows and know what I know,
When into the glad, deep woods I go.

An August Reverie

THERE is an autumn sense subdues the air,
Though it is August and the season still
A part of summer, and the woodlands fair.
I hear it in the humming of the mill,
I feel it in the rustling of the trees,
That scarcely shiver in the passing breeze.

'T is but a touch of Winter ere his time,
A presaging of sleep and icy death,
When skies are rich and fields are in their prime,
And heaven and earth commingle in a breath: —
When hazy airs are stirred with gossamer wings,
And in shorn fields the shrill cicada sings.

So comes the slow revolving of the year,
The glory of nature ripening to decay,
When in those paths, by which, through loves austere,
All men and beasts and blossoms find their way,
By steady easings of the spirit's dream,
From sunlight past the pallid starlight's beam.

Nor should the spirit sorrow as it passes,
  Declining slowly by the heights it came;
We are but brothers to the birds and grasses,
  In our brief coming and our end the same:
And though we glory, god-like in our day,
Perchance some kindred law their lives obey.

There are a thousand beauties gathered round,
  The sounds of waters falling over-night,
The morning scents that steamed from the fresh ground,
  The hair-like streaming of the morning light
Through early mists and dim, wet woods where brooks
Chatter, half-seen, down under mossy nooks.

The ragged daisy starring all the fields,
  The buttercup abrim with pallid gold,
The thistle and burr-flowers hedged with prickly shields,
  All common weeds the draggled pastures hold,
With shrivelled pods and leaves, are kin to me,
Like-heirs of earth and her maturity.

They speak a silent speech that is their own,
  These wise and gentle teachers of the grass;
And when their brief and common days are flown,
  A certain beauty from the year doth pass:—

A beauty of whose light no eye can tell,
Save that it went; and my heart knew it well.

I may not know each plant as some men know
them,
As children gather beasts and birds to tame;
But I went 'mid them as the winds that blow
them,
From childhood's hour, and loved without a
name.
There is more of beauty in a field of weeds
Than in all blooms the hothouse garden breeds.

For they are nature's children; in their faces
I see that sweet obedience to the sky
That marks these dwellers of the wilding places,
Who with the season's being live and die;
Knowing no love but of the wind and sun,
Who still are nature's when their life is done.

They are a part of all the haze-filled hours,
The happy, happy world all drenched with light,
The far-off, chiming click-clack of the mowers,
And yon blue hills whose mists elude my sight;
And they to me will ever bring in dreams
Far mist-clad heights and brimming rain-fed
streams.

In this dream August air, whose ripened leaf,
Pausing before it puts death's glories on,
Deepens its green, and the half-garnered sheaf
Gladdens the haze-filled sunlight, love hath gone
Beyond the material, trembling like a star,
To those sure heights where all thought's glories are.

And Thought, that is the greatness of this earth,
And man's most inmost being, soars and soars,
Beyond the eye's horizon's outmost girth,
Garners all beauty, on all mystery pores:
Like some ethereal fountain in its flow,
Finds heavens where the senses may not go.

In the Spring Fields

THERE dwells a spirit in the budding year —
As motherhood doth beautify the face —
That even lends these barren glebes a grace,
And fills gray hours with beauty that were drear
And bleak when the loud, storming March was here:
A glamour that the thrilled heart dimly traces
In swelling boughs and soft, wet, windy spaces,
And sunlands where the chattering birds make cheer.

I thread the uplands where the wind's footfalls
Stir leaves in gusty hollows, autumn's urns.
Seaward the river's shining breast expands,
High in the windy pines a lone crow calls,
And far below some patient ploughman turns
His great black furrow over steaming lands.

The Dryad

HER soul was sown with the seed of the tree
Of old when the earth was young,
And glad with the light of its majesty
The light of her beautiful being upgrew.
And the winds that swept over land and sea,
And like a harper the great boughs strung,
Whispered her all things new.

The tree reached forth to the sun and the wind
And towered to heaven above.
But she was the soul that under its rind
Whispered its joy through the whole wood's span,
Sweet and glad and tender and kind;
For her love for the tree was a holier love
Than the love of woman for man.

The seasons came and the seasons went
And the woodland music rang;
And under her wide umbrageous tent,
Hidden forever from mortal eye,

She sang earth's beauty and wonderment.
But men never knew the spirit that sang
This music too wondrous to die.

Only nature, forever young,
And her children, forever true,
Knew the beauty of her who sung
And her tender, glad love for the tree;
Till on her music the wild hawk hung
From his eyrie high in the blue
To drink her melody free.

And the creatures of earth would creep from their haunts
To stare with their wilding eyes,
To hearken those rhythms of earth's romance,
That never the ear of mortal hath heard;
Till the elfin squirrels would caper and dance,
And the hedgehog's sleepy and shy surprise
Would grow to the thought of a bird.

And the pale wood-flowers from their cradles of dew
Where they rocked them the whole night long,
While the dark wheeled round and the stars looked through
Into the great wood's slumbrous breast,

Till the gray of the night like a mist outblew;
Hearkened the piercing joy of her song
That sank like a star in their rest.

But all things come to an end at last
When the wings of being are furled.
And there blew one night a maddening blast
From those wastes where ships dismantle and drown,
That ravaged the forest and thundered past;
And in the wreck of that ruined world
The dryad's tree went down.

When the pale stars dimmed their tapers of gold,
And over the night's round rim
The day rose sullen and ragged and cold,
Over that wind-swept, desolate wild,
Where the huge trunks lay like giants of old,
Prone, slain on some battlefield, silent and grim;
The wood-creatures, curious, mild,

Searching their solitudes, found her there
Like a snowdrift out in the morn;
One lily arm round the beech-trunk bare,
One curved, cold, under her elfin head,
With the beechen shine in her nut-brown hair,
And the pallor of dawn on her face, love-lorn,
Beautiful, passionless, dead.

Peniel

IN a place of the mountains of Edom,
And a waste of the midnight shore,
When the evil winds of the desolate hills
Beat with an iron roar,
With the pitiless black of the desert behind,
And the wrath of a brother before : —

In a place of the ancient mountains,
And the time of the midnight dead,
Where the great wide skies of his father's land
Loomed vastly overhead,
Jacob, the son of the ancient of days,
Stood out alone with his dread

And there in that place of darkness,
When the murk of the night grew dim,
Under the wide roof-tree of the world
An unknown stood with him, —
Whether a devil or angel of God, —
With presence hidden and grim,

And spake — " Thou Son of Isaac,
On mountain and stream and tree,

And this wide ruined world of night,
Take thy last look with me:
For out of the darkness have I come,
To die, or conquer thee."

Then Jacob made stern answer, —
"Until thy face I see,
Though I strive with life or wrestle with death,
Yet will I strive with thee:
For better it were to die this hour
Than from my fate to flee.

"Yea, speak thy name or show thy face,
Else shall I conquer thy will."
But the other closed with an iron shock,
Till it seemed the stars so still,
With the lonely night, in a wheeling mist,
Went round by river and hill.

And Jacob strove as the dying strive,
In the woe of that awful place.
Yea, he fought with the desperate soul of one
Who fights in evil case:
And he called aloud in the pauses dread,
"O give me sight of thy face.

"Yea, speak thy name, what art thou, spirit,
Or man, or devil, or God?

Yea, speak thy name!" But no voice came,
From heaven or deep or sod:
And the spirit of Jacob clave to his flesh
As the dews in a dried-up clod.

Then they rocked and swayed as Autumn storms
Do rock the centuried trees:
Yea, swayed and rocked: that other strove,
And drave him to his knees,
And Jacob felt the wide world's gleam
And the roar of unknown seas.

Like to a mighty storm it seemed,
There thundered in his ears:
Then a mighty rushing water teemed
Like brooks of human tears,
And opened the channels of his spent heart,
And washed away his fears.

And he rose with the last despairing strength
Of life's tenacity,
And he swore by the blood of man in him,
And God's eternity,
"'T is my life, my very soul he wants;
That he shall not have of me."

Then his heart grew strong and he felt the earth
Grow iron beneath his feet,

And he drank the balmy airs of night
  Like rose-blooms rare and sweet:
And his soul rose up as a welling brook,
  His life or death to meet.

And he spake to that unknown enemy there, —
  "By yon white stars I vow,
That be thou devil or angel or man,
  Thou canst not conquer me now;
For I feel new lease of life and strength
  In this sweat that beads my brow."

They locked once more; the stars, it seemed
  Went round in dances dim,
Where the great white watchers over each hill,
  With the black night, seemed to swim;
But Jacob knew his enemy now,
  Could nevermore conquer him.

Yea, still with grip of death they strove,
  In iron might, until,
Planet by planet, the great stars dropped
  Down over the westward hill:
And Jacob stood like one who stands
  In the strength of a mighty will.

Then at that late, last midnight hour,
  When the little birds rejoice,

And out of the lands of sleep life looms
With the rustle of day's annoys,
That other spake as one who speaks
With a sad despairing voice,

And cried aloud, "I have met my fate,
Loosen, and let me go;
For I have striven with thee in vain,
Till my heart is water and woe."
"Nay, nay," cried Jacob, "we strive, we twain,
Till the mists of dawning blow."

Then spake that other, "I hate thee not,
My spirit is spent, alas,
Thou art a very lion of men;
Release, and let me pass;
For thou hast my heart and sinews ground
As ocean grinds his grass."

Then answered Jacob, "Nay, nay, thou liar,
This is the lock of death:
For thee or me it must be thus,
The will of my being saith;
Thou man or devil, I hold thee here
Unto thy latest breath;

"For I do feel in thee I hold
My life's supremest hour:

I would as lief let all life slip
As thee from out my power,
Until I gaze on thy hid face,
And read my spirit's dower.

"Yea, show thy face or who thou art,
Or, man or angel or fiend,
I rend thy being fold from fold,
And scatter thee to the wind."
Then they twain rocked as passions rock,
When madness wrecks the mind.

For each now knew this was the end,
And one of them must die,
Then Jacob heaved a mighty breath,
With a last great sobbing cry,
And gripped that other in a grip
Like the grip of those who die.

For he felt once more his spirit faint,
And his strong knees quake beneath,
And it seemed the mountains flamed all red
At the coming of his breath;
And he prayed if he were conquered now
That this might be his death.

The tight grip eased, the huge form slipped
Back earthward with a moan,

And Jacob stood there 'neath the dawn,
  Like one new-changed to stone;
For in the face of the prone man there
  He read his very own.

Not as man sees who reads his fellows
  In the dim crowds that pass:
Nor as a soul may know himself,
  Who looks within a glass: —
But as God sees, who kneads the clay,
  And parts it from the mass.

And over his head the great day rose
  And gloried leaf and wing,
And the little boughs began to tremble,
  And the little birds to sing;
But on his face there shone a strength
Like the power of a new-crowned king.

Afterglow

AFTER the clangor of battle,
There comes a moment of rest,
And the simple hopes and the simple joys
And the simple thoughts are best.

After the victor's pæan,
After the thunder of gun,
There comes a lull that must come to all
Before the set of the sun.

Then what is the happiest memory ?
Is it the foe's defeat ?
Is it the splendid praise of a world
That thunders by at your feet ?

Nay, nay, to the life-worn spirit
The happiest thoughts are those
That carry us back to the simple joys
And the sweetness of life's repose.

A simple love and a simple trust
And a simple duty done
Are truer torches to light to death
Than a whole world's victories won.

The Tree of Truth

THERE grows a mighty centuried tree,
Its roots athwart the world,
Its branches wide as earth's wide girth
By thousand dews impearled.

Its top is hoary, its wide boughs
Reach out to heaven above,
Its roots are knowledge, and its sap
The yearning heart of love.

Men hack its branches, curb its roots,
To trim it to their ken,
Or hide its green in poisonous vines
From evil's grimmest fen.

But evermore while ages wane,
And centuries rise and die,
Through dark, through light, through good and ill,
Its saps the years defy.

For deeper in the heart of things,
And older far than time,
Its roots are fixed in those sure deeps
From which the centuries climb.

Ages ago its girth was great;
Its boughs o'er earth's wide lands;
All peoples gathered 'neath its glades
Where now old ruin stands.

But form and custom staled its green
And curbed it into bounds
Of pruning hooks and greedy walls
That hemmed its sacred rounds.

And vast and wide where once to all
Its radiant leaves were free,
Far peoples paid, with earth's red gold,
Its sacred home to see.

And summer by summer, yea, year by year,
Still lower shrank its head,
Till shallow deceit and life's despair
Declared its heart was dead.

Then men cried, "We will hew it down,
And build from out its wood
A temple rare wherein to teach
Us memory of its good.

"And 'neath its shelter we will keep,
To hold the ages' youth,

"Those holy dreams our fathers drew
From out the tree of truth."

They hacked and hewed, they sawed and planed,
They lopped its branches wide,
Till shorn and bare the old tree stood
To every wind and tide.

And round its scathed and ruined trunk,
Whence life had fled aloof,
They built a temple carved and arched
From floor to groinèd roof.

And reared a shrine where art was all
The end of human pain,
Till a sprout shot forth from the old tree's trunk
And burst its walls amain;

A sturdy, wayward, wilding growth,
That mocked their maimèd dream
Of life and truth in legend carved
On groinèd arch and beam.

Men stood amazed. The teachers cried,
"Behold the curse of earth!
Its life must die or all our words
Are but as nothing worth."

"Nay, nay," cried others, "but let it stand,
Perchance a miracle."
Then straight about its burgeoning boughs
Old bloody battles fell.

Wild clamor and clash of fiery arms,
The old against the new.
Mad hosts arrayed with banner and blade,
Where war's wild trumpets blew.

But as they strove by gates of blood,
With glad unconscious youth,
Higher and wider skyward climbed
The newer tree of truth.

And blithe within its boughs their nests
The birds of heaven made,
While at its foot mid earth's old ruins,
The happy children played.

And form and cant were swept away,
While under its dream sublime,
Men drank anew 'neath heaven's arch
From nature for a time.

Yea, still it spreads its antres vast,
Through peace and clash of arms,

And blossoms brave and blithe and free,
O'er all earth's shrunk alarms.

And still men battle to destroy
The living for the dead
Old ruined trunk of that which towers
Its glories overhead:

And strive for art's distorted ways,
While from earth's heart of youth,
Higher and wider heavenward spreads
The ancient tree of truth.

Glory of the Dying Day

O GLORY of the dying day
That into darkness fades away!
O violet splendor melting down
By river bend o'er tower and town!
O glory of the dying day
That into darkness fades away!

O splendor of the gates of night!
O majesty of dying light
That all a molten glory glows,
Till purple-crimson fades to rose
And dying, melting, outward goes
In ashes on the even's rim,
When all the world grows faint and dim!

O silvern sound of far-off bells
Ringing, ringing miles away
Over river, fields, and fells,
Round the crimson and the gray;
Pealing softly evening out
As the dewy dusk comes down,
And the great night folds about
River, woodlands, hills, and town!

O glory of the fading hills!
  Splendor of the river's breast!
O silence that the whole world fills!
  Sanctity of peaceful rest!
Alien from the care of day,
  Now a petalled star peeps in:
  Now night's choruses begin,
Musical and far away.

O glory of the dying day,
When my life's evening fades away,
May it in splendid peace go down
Like yours o'er river-bend and town —
Not into silence blind and stark,
Not into wintry muffled dark —
  But, heralded by stars divine,
May my life's latest evening ray
  Melt into such a night as thine.

September in the Laurentian Hills

ALREADY Winter in his sombre round,
Before his time hath touched these hills austere
With lonely flame. Last night, without a sound,
The ghostly frost walked out by wood and mere.
And now the sumach curls his frond of fire,
The aspen-tree reluctant drops his gold,
And down the gullies the North's wild vibrant lyre
Rouses the bitter armies of the cold.

O'er this short afternoon the night draws down,
With ominous chill, across these regions bleak;
Wind-beaten gold, the sunset fades around
The purple loneliness of crag and peak,
Leaving the world an iron house wherein
Nor love nor life nor hope hath ever been.

Lazarus

O FATHER ABRAM, I can never rest,
Here in thy bosom in the whitest heaven,
Where love blooms on through days without an even;
For up through all the paradises seven,
There comes a cry from some fierce, anguished breast, —

A cry that comes from out of hell's dark night,
A piercing cry of one in agony,
That reaches me here in heaven white and high;
A call of anguish that doth never die;
Like dream-waked infant wailing for the light.

O Father Abram, heaven is love and peace,
And God is good; eternity is rest.
Sweet would it be to lie upon thy breast
And know no thought but loving to be blest
Save for that cry that nevermore will cease.

It comes to me above the angel-lyres,
The chanting praises of the cherubim;
It comes between my upward gaze and Him,

All-blessed Christ; a voice from the vague dim —
"*O Lazarus, come and ease me of these fires.*"

O Lazarus, I have called thee all these years,
It is so long for me to reach to thee,
Across the ages of this mighty sea,
That loometh dark, dense, like eternity;
Which I have bridged by anguished prayers and tears:

"*Which I have bridged by knowledge of God's love,*
That even penetrates this anguished glare;
A gleaming ray, a tremulous star-built stair,
A road by which love-hungered souls may fare
Past hate and doubt, to heaven and God above."

So calleth it ever upward unto me:
It creepeth in through heaven's golden doors:
It echoes all along the sapphire floors:
Like smoke of sacrifice, it soars and soars,
It fills the vastness of eternity;

Until my sense of love is waned and dimmed:
The music-rounded spheres do clash and jar,
No more those spirit-calls from star to star,
Those harmonies that float and melt afar,
Those belts of light by which all heaven is rimmed.

No more I hear the beat of heavenly wings,
The seraph chanting in my rest-tuned ear:
I only know a cry, a prayer, a tear,
That rises from the depths up to me here;
A soul that to me suppliant leans and clings.

O Father Abram, thou must bid me go
Into the spaces of the deep abyss;
Where far from us and our God-given bliss,
Do dwell those souls that have done Christ amiss;
For through my rest I hear that upward woe.

I hear it crying through the heavenly night,
When curvèd, hung in space, the million moons
Lean planet-ward, and infinite space attunes
Itself to silence. As from drear gray dunes
A cry is heard along the shuddering light,

Of wild dusk-bird, a sad, heart-curdling cry,
So comes to me that call from out hell's coasts;
I see an infinite shore with gaping ghosts!
This is no heaven, with all its shining hosts!
This is no heaven, until that hell doth die!

So spake the soul of Lazarus, and from thence,
Like new-fledged bird from its sun-jewelled nest,

Drunk with the music of the young year's quest,
He sank out into heaven's gloried breast,
Spaceward turned, toward darkness dim, immense.

Hellward he moved like a radiant star shot out
From heaven's blue with rain of gold at even,
When Orion's train and that mysterious seven
Move on in mystic range from heaven to heaven —
Hellward he sank, followed by radiant rout.

The liquid floor of heaven bore him up
With unseen arms, as in his feathery flight
He floated down toward the infinite night;
And each way downward, on the left and right,
He saw each moon of heaven like a cup

Of liquid, misty fire that shone afar
From sentinel towers of heaven's battlements;
But onward, winged by love's desire intense,
And sank, space-swallowed, into the immense,
While with him ever widened heaven's bar.

'T is ages now long-gone since he went out,
Christ-urged, love-driven, across the jasper walls;
But hellward still he ever floats and falls,
And ever nearer come those anguished calls;
And far behind he hears a glorious shout.

The Mother[1]

I

IT was April, blossoming spring,
They buried me, when the birds did sing;

Earth, in clammy wedging earth,
They banked my bed with a black, damp girth.

Under the damp and under the mould,
I kenned my breasts were clammy and cold.

Out from the red beams, slanting and bright,
I kenned my cheeks were sunken and white.

I was a dream, and the world was a dream,
And yet I kenned all things that seem.

I was a dream, and the world was a dream,
But you cannot bury a red sunbeam.

[1] This poem was suggested by the following passage in Tyler's *Animism*: "The pathetic German superstition that the dead mother's coming back in the night to suckle the baby she had left on earth may be known by the hollow pressed down in the bed where she lay."

For though in the under-grave's doom-night
I lay all silent and stark and white,

Yet over my head I seemed to know
The murmurous moods of wind and snow,

The snows that wasted, the winds that blew,
The rays that slanted, the clouds that drew

The water-ghosts up from lakes below,
And the little flower-souls in earth that grow.

Under earth, in the grave's stark night,
I felt the stars and the moon's pale light.

I felt the winds of ocean and land
That whispered the blossoms soft and bland.

Though they had buried me dark and low,
My soul with the season's seemed to grow.

II

From throes of pain they buried me low,
For death had finished a mother's woe.

But under the sod, in the grave's dread doom,
I dreamed of my baby in glimmer and gloom.

I dreamed of my babe, and I kenned that his rest
Was broken in wailings on my dead breast.

I dreamed that a rose-leaf hand did cling:
Oh, you cannot bury a mother in spring!

When the winds are soft and the blossoms are red
She could not sleep in her cold earth-bed.

I dreamed of my babe for a day and a night,
And then I rose in my graveclothes white.

I rose like a flower from my damp earth-bed
To the world of sorrowing overhead.

Men would have called me a thing of harm,
But dreams of my babe made me rosy and warm.

I felt my breasts swell under my shroud;
No star shone white, no winds were loud;

But I stole me past the graveyard wall,
For the voice of my baby seemed to call;

And I kenned me a voice, though my lips were dumb:
Hush, baby, hush! for mother is come.

I passed the streets to my husband's home;
The chamber stairs in a dream I clomb.

I heard the sound of each sleeper's breath,
Light waves that break on the shores of death.

I listened a space at my chamber door,
Then stole like a moon-ray over its floor.

My babe was asleep on a stranger arm.
"O baby, my baby, the grave is so warm,

"Though dark and so deep, for mother is there!
O come with me from the pain and care!

"O come with me from the anguish of earth,
Where the bed is banked with a blossoming girth,

"Where the pillow is soft and the rest is long,
And mother will croon you a slumber-song,

"A slumber-song that will charm your eyes
To a sleep that never in earth-song lies!

"The loves of earth your being can spare,
But never the grave, for mother is there."

I nestled him soft to my throbbing breast,
And stole me back to my long, long rest.

And here I lie with him under the stars,
Dead to earth, its peace and its wars;

Dead to its hates, its hopes, and its harms,
So long as he cradles up soft in my arms.

And heaven may open its shimmering doors,
And saints make music on pearly floors,

And hell may yawn to its infinite sea,
But they never can take my baby from me.

For so much a part of my soul he hath grown
That God doth know of it high on his throne.

And here I lie with him under the flowers
That sun-winds rock through the billowy hours,

With the night-airs that steal from the murmuring
sea,
Bringing sweet peace to my baby and me.

Dusk

DOWN by the shore at even, when the waves
Lap lightly on the reedy rims, and soft,
One trembling star, a blossom, flames aloft,
Where the sunk sun the western heaven laves
With lowest tides of day; the tired world craves
For the great night that cometh brooding in,
With draught of healing over earth's far din,
And blessed rest that recreates and saves.

Far in the breathing woods the whip-poor-will
Reiterates his plaintive note; and hark!
A dusky night-hawk whirrs athwart the dark,
Haunting the shadows, till in silvern swoon,
Hunted by her own spirit, strange and still,
Over the waters comes the wan, white moon.

The Last Prayer

MASTER of life, the day is done;
My sun of life is sinking low;
I watch the hours slip one by one
And hark the night-wind and the snow.

And must thou shut the morning out,
And dim the eye that loved to see;
Silence the melody and rout,
And seal the joys of earth for me?

And must thou banish all the hope —
The large horizon's eagle-swim,
The splendor of the far-off slope
That ran about the world's great rim,

That rose with morning's crimson rays
And grew to noonday's gloried dome,
Melting to even's purple haze
When all the hopes of earth went home?

Yea, Master of this ruined house,
The mortgage closed, outruns the lease;

Long since is hushed the gay carouse
And now the windowed lights must cease.

The doors all barred, the shutters up,
Dismantled, empty, wall and floor,
And now for one grim eve to sup
With death the bailiff at the door.

Yea, I will take the gloomward road
Where fast the Arctic nights set in,
To reach the bourne of that abode
Which thou hast kept for all my kin.

And all life's splendid joys forego,
Walled in with night and senseless stone,
If at the last my heart might know
Through all the dark one joy alone.

Yea, thou mayst quench the latest spark
Of life's weird day's expectancy,
Roll down the thunders of the dark
And close the light of life for me.

Melt all the splendid blue above
And let these magic wonders die,
If thou wilt only leave me Love
And Love's heart-brother Memory.

Though all the hopes of every race
Crumbled in one red crucible,
And melted mingled into space,
Yet, Master, thou wert merciful.

Pan the Fallen

HE wandered into the market
With pipes and goatish hoof;
He wandered in a grotesque shape,
And no one stood aloof.
For the children crowded round him,
The wives and graybeards, too,
To crack their jokes and have their mirth,
And see what Pan would do.

The Pan he was they knew him,
Part man, but mostly beast,
Who drank, and lied, and snatched what bones
Men threw him from their feast;
Who seemed in sin so merry,
So careless in his woe,
That men despised, scarce pitied him,
And still would have it so.

He swelled his pipes and thrilled them,
And drew the silent tear;
He made the gravest clack with mirth
By his sardonic leer.

He blew his pipes full sweetly
  At their amused demands,
And caught the scornful earth-flung pence
  That fell from careless hands.

He saw the mob's derision,
  And took it kindly, too,
And when an epithet was flung,
  A coarser back he threw;
But under all the masking
  Of a brute, unseemly part,
I looked, and saw a wounded soul,
  And a god-like, breaking heart.

And back of the elfin music,
  The burlesque, clownish play,
I knew a wail that the weird pipes made,
  A look that was far away,—
A gaze into some far heaven
  Whence a soul had fallen down;
But the mob only saw the grotesque beast
  And the antics of the clown.

For scant-flung pence he paid them
  With mirth and elfin play,
Till, tired for a time of his antics queer,
  They passed and went their way;

Then there in the empty market
He ate his scanty crust,
And, tired face turned to heaven, down
He laid him in the dust.

And over his wild, strange features
A softer light there fell,
And on his worn, earth-driven heart
A peace ineffable.
And the moon rose over the market,
But Pan the beast was dead;
While Pan the god lay silent there,
With his strange, distorted head.

And the people, when they found him,
Stood still with awesome fear.
No more they saw the beast's rude hoof,
The furtive, clownish leer;
But the lightest spirit in that throng
Went silent from the place,
For they knew the look of a god released
That shone from his dead face.

The Vengeance of Saki

WHEN the moon is red in the heaven, and under the night
Is heard on the winds the thunder of shadowy horses,
Then out of the night I arise, and again am a woman;
And leap to the back of an ebon steed that knows me,
And hound him on in the wake of hoofs that thunder,
Of smoking nostrils, and gleaming eyes, and foam-flecked
Flanks that glow and flash in the flow of the moonlight;
While under the mirk and the moon, out into the blackness,
Round the world's edge with an eerie, mad, echoing laughter,
Leaps the long cry of the hate of the wild snake-woman.

Ha! Ha! it is joy for the hearts that we crush as we thunder!
Ho! Ho! for the hate of the winds that laugh to my laughter!
Ha! Ha! it is well for the shriekings that pass into silence,
As under the night, out into the blackness forever,
Rides the wild hate of Saki, the mad snake-woman!

I was a girl of the South, with eyes as tender
And dreamy and soft and true as the skies of my people;
But I was a slave and an alien captured in battle,
And brought to the North by a people ruder and stronger,
Who held me as naught but a toy, to be played with and broken,
Then thrown aside like a bow that is snapped asunder.
Lithe and supple my limbs as the sinuous serpent,
And quick as the eye and the tongue of the serpent mine anger
That flashed out the fire of my hate on the scorn of my scorners.
But hate soon softened to love, as fire into sunlight,
When my eyes met the eyes of the chieftain, my lord, and my master.

Sweet as the flowers that bloom on the blossoming
prairie,
Gladder than voices of fountains that dance in the
sunlight,
Were the new and tremulous fancies that dwelt in
my bosom;
For he was my king and my sun, and the power of
his glance
To me as at springtime the returning sun to the
landscape,
And his touch and the sound of his voice that set
my heart throbbing.

Sweet were the days of the summer I dwelt in his
tent,
And glad and loving the nights that I lay on his
bosom.
But woe, woe, woe, to the summer that fades into
autumn,
And woe upon woe is the love that dwindles and
dies,
And ere my hot heart was abrim with its summer
of loving
I knew that its autumn had come, that his love
was another's —
A blue-eyed haughty captive they brought from
the East,

Her hair like moving sunlight that rippled and ran
With the golden flow of a brook from her brow to her girdle.
He saw her, he looked on her face, and I was forgotten —
Yea, I and the love that fed on my soul in its anguish!

Ha! Ha! it is joy for the hearts that we crush as we thunder!
Ho! Ho! for the hate of the winds that laugh to my laughter!
Ha! Ha! it is well for the shriekings that pass into silence,
As under the night, out into the darkness forever,
Rides the wild hate of Saki, the mad snake-woman!

I bowed my head with its woe to him in my anguish;
I veiled my face in my hair like the night of my sorrow;
And I plead with him there by the love that was true and forgiving:
Oh! my lord and my love, by the days that are past of our loving,
Oh! slay thy poor Saki, but send her not forth in her anguish!

And I fell to the earth with my face, like the moon
hid in heaven,
In the folds of my hair. But he sate there and
uttered no answer;
And the white woman sate there, and scorned at
the woe of my sorrow.

Then I bit my tongue through that had prayed
for the pity ungiven,
And I rose with my hate in my eyes, like the light-
ning in heaven
That leaps red to kill with a hiss like the snake
that they called me;
And I looked on them there, and I cursed them,
the man, and the woman —
The man whose lips had kissed my love into being,
And the woman whose beauty had withered that
love into ashes —
With curses so dread and so deep that he rose up
and smote me,
And hounded me forth like a dog to die in the
desert.

Ha! Ha! it is joy for the hearts that we crush
as we thunder!
Ho! Ho! for the hate of the winds that laugh to
my laughter!

Ha! Ha! it is well for the shriekings that pass
into silence,
As under the night, out into the blackness for ever,
Rides the wild hate of Saki, the mad snake-woman!

Then wandered I forth an outcast hounded and
beaten;
Careless whither I went or living or dying,
With that load of despair at my heartstrings wear-
ing to madness.
Long and loud I laughed at the heaven that mocked
me
With its beautiful sounds and its sights and the joy
of its being,
For I longed but to die and to go to that region of
darkness
Where I might shroud me and curse in my mad-
ness for ever.
Far, oh far I fled till my feet were wounded
And bruised and cut by the ways unkindly and
cruel.
Then all the world grew red and the sun as a fur-
nace,
And I raved till I knew no more for a horrible
season.
Then I arose, and stood like one in a dream
Who, after long years of forgetting, sudden remem-
bers

The dread wild cry of a wrong that clamors for
righting;
Then sending a curse to the heart of the night sky,
I turned me
And fled like the wind of the winter, the sound of
whose footstep is vengeance.
Late, when the moon had lowered, I entered his
village,
And threading the silent streets came to the well-
known tent-door,
And, dragging aside the skins, with serpentine mo-
tion
Entered now as a thief where once I had entered
as mistress.
And there in the gleam of the moon, with the flame
of her hair on his bosom,
Lay the woman I hated like hell with the man I
loved clasped to her heart.

Ha! Ha! it is joy for the hearts that we crush as
we thunder!
Ho! Ho! for the hate of the winds that laugh to
my laughter!
Ha! Ha! it is well for the shriekings that pass
into silence,
As under the night, out into the blackness forever,
Rides the wild hate of Saki, the mad snake-woman!

If hate could have slain they'd have shrivelled up
there in the moonlight;
But theirs was a sin too deep for the kiss of a
knife-blade.
Long did I stand like a poisoned wind in a desert,
Gray and sad and despairing, and nursing my
hate;
When out of the night, like one voice that calls to
another,
Came the far-off neigh of a horse, and a mad joy
leaped to my veins,
And a thought curled into my heart as a serpent
coils into a flower;
And I turned me, and left them there in their
foolish love and their slumber
That my hot heart hissed was their last.
Then hurrying out of the door that flapped in the
night-wind I fled,
With a pent-up hunger of hate that maddened to
burst from its sluices,
And came to a place on the plain far up and out
from the village,
Where tethered in rows of hurdles, champing and
restless and neighing,
Half a thousand horses were herded under the
night.

Ha! Ha! I live it anew, I dream it again in my madness.
I see that moving ocean of shimmering flanks in the moonlight:
I snatch a brand from a watchfire that smoulders and dwindles:
I creep around to the side of the herd remote from the village:
I cry, a low call, that is answered by a neigh and a whinny:
Then I leap to the back of an ebon stallion that knows me.
'T is but the cut of a thong, a cry in the night,
A fiery waving brand like lightning to thunder,
A terrified moaning and neighing, a heaving of necks and of haunches;
A bound, a rush, a crack of a thong, then a whirlwind of hoofs!
Like a sweep of a wave on a beach we are thundering onwards,
Neck and neck in the wake of my hate, that ever before us
Clamors from heaven to hell in its terrible vengeance!
With neck outstretched and mad eyes agleam in the moonlight,
I see on ahead the sleeping huts in the moonlight.

Ha! Ha! they will rest well under the sleep that
we bring them!
See, see, we are nearing them now; the first wild
thundering hoof-beats
Have ridden them down, 'mid the shriekings and
groanings of anguish,
Blotting them out with their loves and their hates
into blackness.
Ha! Ha! ride, ride, my beauties, my terrible
tramplers!
Pound, pound into dust the mother, the child, and
the husband!
Pound, pound to the pulse of my hate that exults
in your thunders!
Ha! Over the little ones nestled to suckle the
bosom,
Over the man that I loved, we thunder, we thunder!
Over the woman I hate with the flame of her hair
on his bosom;
Trampling, treading them down out into silence
and blackness,
Like the swirl of a merciless storm we sweep on
to darkness forever!
And now, when the moon is in heaven, and under
the night
Is heard on the winds the thunder of shadowy
horses,

Then out of the dark I arise, and again am a woman;
And leap to the back of an ebon steed that knows me,
And hound him on in the wake of hoofs that thunder;
While under the mirk and the moon, out into the blackness,
Round the world's edge with an eerie, mad, echoing laughter,
Leaps the long cry of the hate of the wild snake-woman.

Ha! Ha! it is joy for the hearts that we crush as we thunder!
Ho! Ho! for the hate of the winds that laugh to my laughter!
Ha! Ha! it is well for the shriekings that pass into silence,
As under the night, out into the blackness forever,
Rides the wild hate of Saki, the mad snake-woman!

Love

LOVE came at dawn when all the world was fair,
When crimson glories, bloom, and song were rife;
Love came at dawn when hope's wings fanned the air,
And murmured, "I am life."

Love came at even when the day was done,
When heart and brain were tired, and slumber pressed;
Love came at eve, shut out the sinking sun,
And whispered, "I am rest."

Victoria

JUBILEE ODE, A. D. 1897

WITH thunder of cannon and far-off roll of drum,
And martial music blaring forth her glory,
'Mid miles of thronging millions down each street
Where all the earth is bound in one heart-beat
The world's great Empire's greatest Queen doth come,
Borne on one mighty, rocking earthquake voice
Wherein all peoples of wide earth rejoice —
She comes, she comes, to beat of martial drums,
And pageants blazoning England's ancient story;
The good, gray Queen, whose majesty and worth
Have lent their radiance to remotest earth;
While the splendor and might and power of her mighty empire bound her;
And the serried millions, mad with joy, are near her,
All to love her, none to fear her,
But nearer far than power, than splendor dearer,
The surging love of her loved people round her.

She comes, she comes, encircled by her people,
While praise to Heaven peals out from tower and steeple,
Into the great cathedral, hushed and dim,
With thankful heart and humble queenly head
Over the sleep of England's mighty dead,
To render up her heart's best thoughts to Him
The King of Kings — 'mid hush of priestly tread,
And gloried anthem's solemn pealing hymn.

The mighty millions, awed, now bow the head,
Thank Heaven for her simple, noble life,
Earth's queenliest empress, mother, daughter, wife!
Thank Heaven for all she held her dearest own!
Forgiveness for the weakness she hath known!
Blessings on her wise old widowed head,
For what her life is now, and what her life hath been,
Noble mother, wife and Queen!

Let the mighty organs roll, and the mighty throng disperse!
She is ours, and we are hers,
And both are Britain's. Both to Britain's God
Lift up the heart-felt praise for the might of splendid days,
For the glory that hath been.

Let the cannon thunder out, and the miles of
voices shout — Victoria!
Let the bells peal out afar, till the rocket tells the
star,
And the ocean shouts its pæan to the thunder-
answering bar;
England's glory, Britain's pride,
Revered of half a world beside,
O good gray Queen, Victoria!

Daughter of monarchs, mother of kings;
All her sorrows we have shared,
All her triumphs they are ours.
Kind Heaven, that virtue still endowers,
Be with her, may her path be flowers;
Be with her, may her days be spared,
Death aloof with shadowing wings,
Unto nature's latest hours!
Daughter of monarchs, mother of kings,
O good gray Queen, Victoria!

Let all feuds of faction die,
Let the blaring party bugles cease to blow,
Let insincere and base detraction lie,
With sore defeat and bitterness, her carping sisters,
low,
In this one supremest hour,

Day of Britain's ancient power,
Day of all her golden dower,
Of victory-towering centuries, tower on tower.
Let all our hatreds be forgot,
All bitterness be swept away,
Remembering only the glory of our lot
In this century-honoring day!
Celt and Scot and Saxon, let us only know,
A mighty Queen comes to her own at last,
Her people's love and reverence — as the glow
Of some splendid western heaven,
Deepening into richer even,
Ere it purples to the vast.

Past the mailèd gates of fears,
The hooded menace of the years,
Where rang the iron voices rolling on her ears,
Of royal dreams the requiem and pall,
And awful fates of thrones foredoomed to fall;
Our aged Queen, on this glad day she stands
Amid the throbbings of her land's great love,
Firm in her rule, her faith in God above,
Earth's golden keys of happiness in her hands.

O splendid life of Britain's splendid days!
O noble soul, above all blame or praise!
O fame that will outlast our little fame!

O long-enduring honor greater than time or death!
O name that will outlive even that immortal name,
England's more ancient glory, the great Elizabeth!

And we, thy loyal subjects far away,
In these new lands that own thy sceptre's sway,
Betwixt thy Royal Isle and far Cathay —
Across the thunder of the western foam,
O good gray Queen, our hearts go home, go home,
To thine and thee!
We are thine own while empires rise and wane,
We are thine own for blessing or for bane,
And, come the shock of thundering war again,
For death or victory!

Not that we hate our brothers to the south,
They are our fellows in the speech of mouth,
They are our wedded kindred, our own blood,
The same world-evils we and they withstood,
Our aims are theirs, one common future good —
Not that we hate them, but that there doth lie
Within our hearts a golden fealty
To Britain, Britain, Britain, till the world doth die.

And him we send thee as our greatest son,
The people's choice, to whose firm hand is given

The welfare of our country under heaven;
No truer son hast thou in all thy coasts,
No wiser, kindlier, stronger, Britain boasts;
Our knightly leader, Norman in his blood,
But truest Briton in heart and speech and mind,
Belovèd well of all his fellow-kind,
In statesmanship our nation's highest mood,
Our silver-tongued and golden-hearted one,
In every inch and every thought a man,
Our noblest type, ideal Canadian!
Receive him 'mid those, greatest, thou dost own,
Thy mighty empire-builders, bastioning round thy throne.

O England's latest, greatest Queen,
Greatness more great than all her greatness that hath been,
Under thy sceptre the outmost continents hang,
And trackless oceans thunder out their surges.
These are thy realms. Never in earth's old story
Hath queen of earthly realm owned such resplendent glory.
Not golden Homer such wondrous kingdoms sang.
Round earth's wide girdle thy mighty empire verges,
Out-splendoring all prophecy of olden days;

Thou, latest and greatest on that throne whose base
Withstood the shock of centuries, still withstands
The lowering hate of Europe's iron bands;
In thy true keeping shall that sceptre be
A golden wand of happiness to the free
Who call thee Queen from outmost sea to sea.
That throne to them a mighty lighthouse tower,
A truth-compelling majesty of light,
Blinding the mists of ignorance and night,
Where round its base throughout the centuries' flight,
Thunder in vain earth's hosts upon its iron power.

England

ENGLAND, England, England,
Girdled by ocean and skies,
And the power of a world and the heart of a race,
And a hope that never dies.

England, England, England,
Wherever a true heart beats,
Wherever the rivers of commerce flow,
Wherever the bugles of conquest blow,
Wherever the glories of liberty grow,
'T is the name that the world repeats.

And ye who dwell in the shadow
Of the century's sculptured piles,
Where sleep our century-honored dead
While the great world thunders overhead,
And far out miles on miles,
Beyond the smoke of the mighty town,
The blue Thames dimples and smiles;
Not yours alone the glory of old,
Of the splendid thousand years,
Of Britain's might and Britain's right

And the brunt of British spears.
Not yours alone, for the great world round
Ready to dare and do,
Scot and Celt and Norman and Dane,
With the Northman's sinew and heart and brain,
And the Northman's courage for blessing or bane
Are England's heroes too.

North and South and East and West,
Wherever their triumphs be,
Their glory goes home to the ocean-girt isle
Where the heather blooms and the roses smile
With the green isle under her lee;
And if ever the smoke of an alien gun
Should threaten her iron repose,
Shoulder to shoulder against the world,
Face to face with her foes,
Scot and Celt and Saxon are one
Where the glory of England goes.
And we of the newer and vaster West,
Where the great war banners are furled,
And commerce hurries her teeming hosts,
And the cannon are silent along our coasts,
Saxon and Gaul, Canadians claim
A part in the glory and pride and aim
Of the Empire that girdles the world.

England, England, England,
Wherever the daring heart
By Arctic floe or torrid strand
Thy heroes play their part;
For as long as conquest holds the earth,
Or commerce sweeps the sea,
By Orient jungle or Western plain,
Will the Saxon spirit be.
And whatever the people that dwell beneath,
Or whatever the alien tongue,
Over the freedom and peace of the world
Is the flag of England flung.
Till the last great freedom is found,
And the last great truth be taught,
Till the last great deed be done
And the last great battle is fought;
Till the last great fighter is slain in the last great fight
And the war-wolf is dead in his den,
England, breeder of hope and valor and might,
Iron mother of men.

Yea, England, England, England,
Till honor and valor are dead,
Till the world's great cannons rust,
Till the world's great hopes are dust,
Till faith and freedom be fled,

Till wisdom and justice have passed
To sleep with those who sleep in the many-chambered vast,
Till glory and knowledge are charnelled dust in dust,
To all that is best in the world's unrest,
In heart and mind you are wed.
While out from the Indian jungle
To the far Canadian snows,
Over the east and over the west,
Over the worst and over the best,
The flag of the world to its winds unfurled,
The blood-red ensign blows.

Sebastian Cabot

I

NEW startled from her sensual dreams,
Europa half-expectant lay,
Revolving dimly broken gleams
Of some far-off unrisen day,
As one sees through dim mists of night
Some far, majestic, moon-paved mountain way.
On grim and barbarous couch reclined,
Groped blindly toward her ultimate goal,
When she through midnight of the mind
Would wake to knowledge of her soul.
So with a prescience all divine,
She left her bestial gods behind,
And turned her toward the western stars,
When this old rugged, princely tar-of-tars
Beat bravely out, where heaving leagues on leagues
Billowed the western brine.

II

Greater than power or splendor,
Or birth, or might of gold,
Is the noble life of a noble man

Of a heart both brave and bold —
All honor to the spirit
That knows not earth's defeat,
That meets with courage true and strong
What brave souls have to meet —
And honor to the hero,
Who centuries ago
Sailed out from old Bristowe
Into the trackless waters of the west;
Who bravely beat and beat
Where sky and waters meet,
Till he saw his white cliffs vanish
Under ocean's heaving breast;
Nor cowardly turned him back,
But held straight on his track,
Though old ocean rose up ravening in gray and angry wrack,
And bravely beat and bore up to the west;
All honor to his spirit,
For the glories we inherit,
And peace of mighty slumber
Breathe calmly round his rest!
Where'er his earthy bed,
About his pillowed head
Forever beats old Ocean's monotone: —
For even from a child he loved its voices wild,
Its splendid throb that made his heart its own.

III

I dream his name, and there doth come to me,
A vision of league-long breakers landward hurled;
Of olden ships far-beating out to sea;
Of splendid shining wastes of heaving green
Far-stretching round the world;
Of many voices heard from many lands,
Torrid and Arctic, Orient, and the Line;
Of heaving of vast anchors, vanishing strands;
And over all the wonder and thunder and wash
Of the loud, world-conquering brine.
Of sky-rimmed waste, or fog-enshrouded reef,
Where some mad siren ever sings the grief
Of all the mighty wrecks in that weird span
Since ocean and time began.

IV

Venice and England cradled!
Could this seaman be
Other than ocean's child,
With heart less restless than that vast and wild
Great heart of the thrilling sea?
Wakened to her long thunders,
Cradled in her soft voice,
Could other voice of all earth's voices sweet
Make his stern heart rejoice?

Yea, this was better than all, greater than all to him,
Truer than youth's mad whim,
The only love of his youth, the only lore of his age,
To gaze on her vast tumultuous scroll,
To pore on her wrinkled page: —
For he was very soul of her soul,
And she meet mother for him.

V

Over the hazy distance,
Beyond the sunset's rim,
Forever and forever
Those voices called to him.
Westward! westward! westward!
The sea sang in his head,
At morn in the busy harbor,
At nightfall on his bed —
Westward! westward! westward!
Over the line of breakers,
Out of the distance dim;
Forever the foam-white fingers
Beckoning, beckoning him.

VI

This was no common spirit,
This sailor of old Bristowe;
Not one of the mart-made helots
Such as the world doth know;
But a bronzed and rugged veteran,
Adrift in the vanguard's flow;
A son of the world's great highway
Where the mighty storm winds blow.

VII

All honor to this grand old Pilot,
Whose flag is struck, whose sails are furled,
Whose ship is beached, whose voyage ended;
Who sleeps somewhere in sod unknown,
Without a slab, without a stone,
In that great Island, sea-impearled.
Yea, reverence with honor blended,
For this old seaman of the past,
Who braved the leagues of ocean hurled,
Who out of danger knowledge rended,
And built the bastions, sure and fast,
Of that great bridgeway grand and vast
Of golden commerce round the world.
All honor! yea, a day shall come,
If glory lives in human rhyme,

When our poor faltering lips are dumb;
A greater and more splendid time,
When larger men of mightier aim
Shall do meet honor to his name.
Yea, honor! only greatness keeps
Its sanctuary where this seaman sleeps;
This old Venetian, Briton-born,
Who held of fear a hero's scorn,
Who nailed his colors to the mast,
Who sought in reverence for the true,
And found it in the rifting blue
Of those broad furrows of the vast: —
Who knew no honors, held no state,
But in his ruggedness was great.
Who like some sea-shell, in him felt
The universe of ocean dwelt,
Whose whole true being nature cast
Like his own ocean-spaces, vast!

VIII

Yea, he is dead; this mighty seaman!
Four long centuries ago.
Beating westward, ever westward,
Beating out from old Bristowe,
Saw he far in visions lifted,
Down the golden sunset's glow,
Through the bars of twilight rifted,

All the glories that we know.
Beating westward, ever westward,
Over heaving leagues of brine,
Buffeted by arctic scurries,
Languid trade-winds from the line;
With a courage heaven-gifted,
And a fortitude divine.
Yea, he is dead; but who shall say
That all the splendid deeds he wrought,
That all the lofty truths he taught
(If truth be knowledge nobly sought),
Are dead and vanished quite away?
Nay nay, he lives; and such as he,
In every lofty human dream,
In every true sublimity
That splendors earth and makes it teem
With inward might and majesty;
This grand old Pilot of Bristowe,
Incarnate, comes to earth again,
As when, four hundred years ago,
He swept in storm and shine and snow,
Athwart the thunders of the main.

IX

Greater far than shaft or storied fane,
Than bronze and marble blent,
Greater than all the honors he could gain

From a nation's high intent,
He sleeps alone, in his great isle, unknown,
With the chalk-cliffs all around him for his mighty
grave-yard stone,
And the league-long sounding roar
Of old ocean, forevermore
Beating, beating, about his rest,
For fane and monument.

The World-Mother

(SCOTLAND)

BY crag and lonely moor she stands,
This mother of half a world's great men,
And kens them far by sea-wracked lands,
Or orient jungle or western fen.

And far out mid the mad turmoil,
Or where the desert places keep
Their lonely hush, her children toil,
Or wrapt in wide-world honor sleep.

By Egypt's sands or western wave,
She kens her latest heroes rest,
With Scotland's honor o'er each grave,
And Britain's flag above each breast.

And some at home. — Her mother love
Keeps crooning wind-songs o'er their graves,
Where Arthur's castle looms above,
Or Strathy storms or Solway raves.

Or Lomond unto Nevis bends
In olden love of clouds and dew;
Where Trosach unto Stirling sends
Greetings that build the years anew.

Out where her miles of heather sweep,
Her dust of legend in his breast,
'Neath agèd Dryburgh's aisle and keep,
Her Wizard Walter takes his rest.

And her loved ploughman, he of Ayr,
More loved than any singer loved
By heart of man amid those rare,
High souls the world hath tried and proved;

Whose songs are first to heart and tongue,
Wherever Scotsmen greet together,
And, far-out alien scenes among,
Go mad at the glint of a sprig of heather.

And he her latest wayward child,
Her Louis of the magic pen,
Who sleeps by tropic crater piled,
Far, far, alas, from misted glen;

Who loved her, knew her, drew her so,
Beyond all common poet's whim;—

In dreams the whaups are calling low,
In sooth her heart is woe for him.

And they, her warriors, greater none
E'er drew the blade of daring forth,
Her Colin [1] under Indian sun,
Her Donald [2] of the fighting North.

Or he, her greatest hero, he,
Who sleeps somewhere by Nilus' sands,
Grave Gordon, mightiest of those free,
Great captains of her fighting bands.

Yea, these and myriad myriads more,
Who stormed the fort or ploughed the main,
To free the wave or win the shore,
She calls in vain, she calls in vain.

Brave sons of her, far severed wide
By purpling peak or reeling foam;
From western ridge or orient side,
She calls them home, she calls them home.

[1] Colin Campbell, Hero of Lucknow.

[2] Sir Donald Mackay, first Lord Reay, whose Mackay Dutch regiment was famous in the thirty years war.

And far, from east to western sea,
The answering word comes back to her,
" Our hands were slack, our hopes were free,
We answered to the blood astir ;

" The life by Kelpie loch was dull,
The homeward slothful work was done,
We followed where the world was full,
To dree the weird our fates had spun.

" We built the brigg, we reared the town,
We spanned the earth with lightning gleam,
We ploughed, we fought, mid smile and frown,
Where all the world's four corners teem.

" But under all the surge of life,
The mad race-fight for mastery,
Though foremost in the surgent strife,
Our hearts went back, went back to thee."

For the Scotsman's speech is wise and slow,
And the Scotsman's thought it is hard to ken,
But through all the yearnings of men that go,
His heart is the heart of the northern glen.

His song is the song of the windy moor,
And the humming pipes of the squirling din ;

And his love is the love of the shieling door,
  And the smell of the smoking peat within.

And nohap how much of the alien blood
  Is crossed with the strain that holds him fast,
Mid the world's great ill and the world's great good,
  He yearns to the Mother of men at last.

For there 's something strong and something true
  In the wind where the sprig of heather is blown;
And something great in the blood so blue,
  That makes him stand like a man alone.

Yea, give him the road and loose him free,
  He sets his teeth to the fiercest blast,
For there 's never a toil in a far countrie,
  But a Scotsman tackles it hard and fast.

He builds their commerce, he sings their songs,
  He weaves their creeds with an iron twist,
And making of laws or righting of wrongs,
  He grinds it all as the Scotsman's grist.

. . . . . .

Yea, there by crag and moor she stands,
  This mother of half a world's great men,
And out of the heart of her haunted lands
  She calls her children home again.

And over the glens and the wild sea floors
She peers so still as she counts her cost,
With the whaups low calling over the moors,
"Woe, woe, for the great ones she hath lost."

The Lazarus of Empire

THE Celt, he is proud in his protest,
The Scot, he is calm in his place,
For each has a word in the ruling and doom
Of the Empire that honors his race;
And the Englishman, doggèd and grim,
Looks the world in the face as he goes,
And he holds a proud lip, for he sails his own ship,
And he cares not for rivals nor foes:—
But lowest and last, with his areas vast,
And horizon so servile and tame,
Sits the poor beggar Colonial
Who feeds on the crumbs of her fame.

He knows no place in her councils,
He holds no part in the word
That girdles the world with its thunders
When the fiat of Britain is heard:—
He beats no drums to her battles,
He gives no triumphs her name,
But lowest and last, with his areas vast,
He feeds on the crumbs of her fame.

How long, O how long, the dishonor,
The servile and suppliant place?
Are we Britons who batten upon her,
Or degenerate sons of the race?
It is souls that make nations, not numbers,
As our forefathers proved in the past.
Let us take up the burden of empire,
Or nail our own flag to the mast.
Doth she care for us, value us, want us,
Or are we but pawns in the game;
Where lowest and last, with our areas vast,
We feed on the crumbs of her fame?

In Holyrood

1897

I STAND in Edinburgh, in Holyrood,
Where Scotland's Mary flaunted; iron Knox came,
With cavernous eyes and words of prophet-flame,
And broke her soul as bonds of brittle wood: —
And all stern Scotland's evil and her good,
Her austere ghosts, her souls of fiery shame,
Her adamantine passions none could tame,
Arise anew and drip in Rizzio's blood.

Here in these walls, these guilty corridors,
Beside[1] that bed where Elizabeth's eyes look down; —
Across the centuries with their fading band
Of angry years of Presbyterian frown, —
I only know these tears[2] of weird remorse;
The woman rules. All else is shifting sand.

[1] In Queen Mary's bedroom in Holyrood, a portrait of Queen Elizabeth hangs on the wall above the bed.

[2] It is said that Knox, during this memorable interview, made the Queen weep.

Unabsolved

A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

(This poem is founded on the confession of a man who went with one of the expeditions to save Sir John Franklin's party, and who, being sent ahead, saw signs of them, but, through cowardice, was afraid to tell.)

O FATHER, hear my tale, then pity me,
For even God his pity hath withdrawn.
O death was dread and awful in those days!
You prate of hell and punishment to come,
And endless torments made for those who sin.
Stern priest, put down your cross and hearken me; —
I see forever a white glinting plain,
From night to night across the twinkling dark,
A world of cold and fear and dread and death,
And poor lost ones who starve and pinch and die; —
I could have saved them — I — yea, even I.
You talk of hell! Is hell to see poor frames,
Wan, leathery cheeks, and dull, despairing eyes,
From whence a low-flamed madness ebbing out,

Goes slowly deathward through the eerie hours,
To hear forever pitiless, icy winds
Feel in the shivering canvas of the tent,
With idle, brute curiosity nature hath,
While out around, one universe of death,
Stretches the loveless, hearthless arctic night?

This is my doom, it sitteth by my side,
And never leaves me through the desolate years.
Go, take your hell to men who never lived,
Save as the slow world wendeth, sluggish, dull.
Even they must suffer also, poor bleak ones,
Then is your feeble comfort nothing worth.
You tell me to have hope, God will forgive.
O Priest, can God forgive a sin like mine?
You say He is all-loving, did He lie
With me that night amid the eyeless dark,
And writhe with me, and whisper, "Save thyself,
That way to north lies cold and age and death,
And awful failure on men's awèd tongues,
To linger years hereafter; Southward lies
Home heat and love, and sweet, blood-pulsing life, —
Life, with its morns and eves and glad to-morrows,
And joy and hope for many days to be?"

Did He, I say, lie with me there that night,
And know that awful tragedy beyond,

And my poor tragedy enacted there ?
Then must He feel Him since as I have felt,
And live that hideous misery in His heart.
And, knowing this, I say unto thee, priest,
He could not be a God and say, forgive.
You plead my soul's salvation the one end
And aim of all my thought; then hearken, priest,
For this my sin hath made me more than wise: —
That seems to me the one great sin I sinned
In selling all to save mine evil self.

Stay, hearken, priest, and haunt me not with hopes
As futile as those icy-fingered winds
That stirred the canvas there that arctic night.
I bid thee hark and mumble not thy prayers
Like August bees heard in a summer room,
That drone afar, but keep them for the dead,
The dull-eared dead who sleep and heed them not.

Then hearken, priest, and learn thee of my woe,
For I have lain afar on northern nights,
By star-filled wastes, and conned it o'er and o'er,
And thought on God, and life, and many things,
And all the baffling mystery of the dark.
And I have held that awful rendezvous
Of naked self with self alone and bare,
And knew myself as men have never known; —

Have fought the duel, flashing hilt to hilt,
And blade to blade, of flesh and spirit there,
Until I lay a weak and wounded thing,
Like some poor, mangled bird the sportsman leaves,
Writhing and twisting there amid the dark.

You talk of ladders leading up to light,
Of windows bursting on the perfect day,
Of dawns grown ruddy on the blackest night.
Yea, I have groped about the muffled walls,
And beat my spirit's prison all in vain,
Only to find them shrouded fold on fold;
And still the cruel, icy stars look down,
And my dread memory stayeth with me still.

It was a strange, mad quest we went upon,
To seek the living in the lifeless north.
For days and days and long, lone, loveless nights
We set our faces toward the arctic sky,
And threaded wastes of that lone wilderness,
Beyond the lands of summer and glad spring,
Beyond the regions kind of flower and bird,
Past glint horizons of auroral gleams,
A haunted world of winter's wizened sleep,
Where death, a giant, aged, and stark and wan,
Kept fast the entrance of those sunless caves
Where hides the day beyond the icy seas.

Long day by day a desolation went
Where our wan faces fared, o'er all that waste;
And I was young and filled with love of life,
And fear of ugly death as some weird black,
The enemy of love and youth and joy;
A lonely, ruined bridge at edge of night,
Fading in blackness at the outer end.
And those were cold, stern men I went with there,
Who held their lives as men do hold a gift
Not worth the keeping; men who told dread tales,
That made a madness in me of that waste
And all its hellish, lonely solitude,
And set my heart abeating for the south,
Until that awful desolation ringed
My reason round, and shrunk my fearful heart.
Yea, Father, I had saved them but for this; —
Why did they send me on alone, ahead,
Poor me, the only weak one of that band,
Who was too much of coward to show my fear?
Why did life give me that mad fear of death,
To make me selfish at the very last?
Why did God give those men into my hand,
And leave them victim to a craven fear
That walked those lonely wastes in form of man?

No, Father, take your cross, mine is a pain
That only distant ages can out-burn.

Forgiveness! No, you know not what you say;
You churchmen mumble words as charmers do,
And talk of God and love so glib and pat,
And think you reach men's souls and give them light,
When all the time my spirit is to you
A land unfound, a region far-removed,
Where walk dim ghosts of thoughts and fears and pains
You never dreamed of. What know you of souls
Like this of mine that hath girt misery's sum,
And found the black with which God veils His face?
You say the church absolves, you speak of peace;
You talk of what not even God can do,
Be He but what you make Him. In my light,—
And mine is light of one who knows the case,
The facts, the reasons, and hath weighed them too,—
There is but one absolver, the absolved.

For I, since that far, fatal, arctic night,
Have been alone in some dread, shadowy court,
Where I was judge and guilty prisoner too.
Words, words are empty; were life built on words,
How rich the poor would grow, the weak be strong,

The hateful loving, and the scornful weak! —
The king would be a peasant, and the poor
A king in his own right; the murderer, red
From his foul guilt, would pass to God's own breast,
And all damned things, long damned of earth's consent,
And some dread law much older far than we,
Would blossom righteous under heaven's face.

Still fared we north across that frozen waste
Of icy horror ringed with awful night,
To seek the living in a world of death;
And as we fared a terror grew and grew
About my heart like madness, till I dreamed
A vague desire to flee by night and creep,
By steel-blue windless plain and haunted wood,
And wizened shore and headland, once more south.
There, as we went, the days grew wan and shrunk,
And nights grew vast and weird and beautiful,
Walled with flame-glories of auroral light,
Ringing the frozen world with myriad spears
Of awful splendor there across the night.
And ever anon a shadowy, spectral pack
Of gleaming eyes and panting, lurid tongues
Haunted the lone horizon toward the south.

Then life ebbed lower in the bravest heart,
And spake the leader, "If in ten more days
We chance on nothing, then will we return,
And set our faces once more to the south."
For that dread land began to close us in,
With cold and hunger, bit at our poor limbs,
Till life grew there a feeble, flickering flame,
Amid the snows and ice-floes of that land.
Then ten days crept out shrunk and gray and wan,
With nothing but the lonely, haunted waste.
Then spake the leader, "If in five more days!
Then parcelled out those five gray, haggard days,
While life to me grew like an ebbing tide,
That surged far out from some dread death-like
strand.
And horror came upon me like the night,
That seemed to gird the world in desolate walls.
Then spake the leader, "If in three more days!"

But when the third day waned we came, at last,
Unto the shores of some dread, lonely sea,
That gloomed to north and night, and far beyond,
Where ruined straits and headlands loomed and sank,
There seemed the awful endings of the world.

Then spake the leader, "Let us go not yet,
But stay a little ere we turn us south,

Perchance, poor souls, they might be somewhere
here."
And then to me, "You go, for you are young
And strong, and life throbs quickest in your veins,
And you have eyes more strong to see, for ours
Are dimmed by the dread frost-mists of this land;
And creep out there beyond yon gleaming ledge,
And bring me word of what you there may see.

And if you meet no sign of mast or sail,
Or hull or wreck, or mark of living soul,
Then we will turn our faces to the south;
For this great ocean's vastness hems us in,
And death here nightly creeps from strand to strand,
And binds with girth of black the gleaming world."

Then, whispering "Madness, madness," to the dark,
I crept me fearful o'er that gleaming ledge,
And saw but night and awful gulfs of dark,
And weird ice-mountains looming desolate there,
And far beyond the vastness of that sea.
And then — O God, why died I not that hour? —
Amid the gleaming floes far up that shore,
So far it seemed that man's foot scarce could go,
The certain, tapering outline of a mast,
And one small patch of rag; and then I felt
No man could ever live to reach that place,

And horror seized me of that haunted world,
That I should die there and be froze for aye,
Amid the ice-core of its awful heart.
Then crept I back, the weak ghost of a life,
A miserable, shaking, coffined fear,
And spake, "I saw but ice and winds and dark,
And the dread vastness of that desolate sea."
Again he spake, "Creep out once more and look;
Perchance your sight was misled by the gleam."
And then once more I crept out on that ledge,
And saw again the night and awful dark,
And that poor beckoning mast that haunts me yet;
And as I lay those moments seemed to grow,
As men have felt in looking down long years,
And there I chose 'twixt evil and the good,
And took the evil; then began my hell,
And back I crept with that black lie on lips,
And spake again, "I only saw the night,
And those weird mountains and the awful deep."

At that he moaned and spake, "Poor souls! poor
souls!
Then they are doomed if ever men were doomed."
Whereat a sudden, great auroral flame
Filled all the heaven, lighting wastes and sea,
And came a wondrous shock across the world,
Like sounds of far-off battle where hosts die,

As if God thundered back mine awful lie,
And I fell in a heap where all was black.

When next I lived, we were full three days south,
And two had died upon that dreadful march;
The memory came, and I went laughing mad,
But kept mine awful secret to this hour.

No, priest, you can do nothing; pain like mine
Must smoulder out in its own agony,
Till there be nought but ashes at the last.

But something 'mid the pauses of the dark
Doth teach me that I am not all alone,
For I have dreamed in my dread, maddest hour,
An awful shadow, blacker than my black,
Went ever with me. Hearken to me now:
I never felt a hand or saw a face,
I never knew a comfort more than sleep,
The winters they are only barren snows,
And age is hard, and death waits at the last.

But I have felt in some dim, shapeless way,
As memories long remembered after youth,
That back of all there is some mighty will,
Beyond the little dreams that we are here,

Beyond the misery of our days and years,
Beyond the outmost system's outmost rim,
Where wrinkled suns in awful blackness swim,
A wondrous mercy that is working still.

Her Look

TIME may set his fingers there,
Fix the smiles that curve about
Her winsome mouth, and touch her hair,
Put the curves of youth to rout;
But the "something" God put there,
That which drew me to her first,
Not the imps of pain and care,
Not all sorrow's fiends accurst,
Can kill the look that God put there.

Something beautiful and rare,
Nothing common can destroy;
Not all the leaden load of care,
Not all the dross of earth's alloy;
Better than all fame or gold,
True as only God's own truth,
It is something all hearts hold
Who have loved once in their youth.

That sweet look her face doth hold
Thus will ever be to me;

Joy may all her pinions fold,
Care may come and misery;
Through the days of murk and shine,
Though the roads be foul or fair,
I will see through love's glad eyne
That sweet look that God put there.

The Wayfarer

HE woke with the dawning
Met eyes with the sun,
And drank the wild rapture
Of living begun.

But he went with the moment
To follow the clue,
Ere the first red of dawning
Had drunk the blue dew.

Follow him, follow him,
Where the world will,
Under the sunlight
By meadow and hill.

Down the blue distance,
Round the world's rim,
Where the hosts of the future
Are horning for him.

Follow him, call to him,
Pray to him, Sweet,

Tell him the morning
Is fresh for his feet;

Sing him the rapture,
The glamour, the gleam
Of pearly dew-azure
That curtains the stream;

Sing the glad thrushnote
That never knew pain,
But sing him and call him
And pray him in vain.

For ere the red dewdrop
In sunlight was pearled,
He heard that mad ocean
That whelms the world.

Yea, heard that voice calling
Past sunlight and dew,
That rarest, alluringest,
Ever heart knew.

That siren of sunrise,
That weaver of songs,
Till the heart of man hearkens
And gladdens and longs,

Till o'er the blue distance,
As opens the rose,
The yearning impulsion
Of all his life goes;

And many a dragon
Chimera so grim,
Down the dream of the morning
Is vanquished by him.

Yea, sing to him, call him through
Heartache in vain.
But the gladdest day wakened
To glory, must wane;

And the noonday he longed for
To fierce light will burn,
And the battles he wages
Grow bitter and stern;

And the surge of life sink
To the moan of a bar;
And the hopes of the morning
Grow hollow and far;

And the road that he follows
Less luring and true,

Till he longs for a whiff
  Of the morning he knew.

For he hears thy far singing,
  That lures not in vain,
Till he comes to thy beauty
  Of dawning again.

But the roads of returning
  Are never the same
As the sweet dewy meadows
  Of morning we came.

But the song of alluring
  Is ever as true,
To lead the heart back
  To the beauty it knew;

And vain the mad magic
  Where life's glories burn,
For the heart of the yearner
  Who longs to return:

For he hears that voice calling,
  Voiced never in vain,
To world-heart aweary
  For all dreamings fain;

And he hears the low grasses,
The green tents of sod,
From roof-trees of slumber,
As voices of God;

And the spinning and turning,
Of madness amain
Fade out from his dreaming
As night from the pane,

When the rosy-red splendor
In dewdreams impearled,
From ashes of slumber,
Lifts over the world.

Yea, back from those echoes
Of bugles that blew,
Heart-weary, life-broken,
He wanders to you;

Yea, back to his truest,
Those far broken gleams
Of that rosy-red, morning-lit
House of his dreams.

Where all hours were splendid,
And all hearts held true,

In those glory-lit visions
Of beauty and you.

Yea, call to him, cry to him,
Mother of all;
You lit his youth's torches,
You saw their flames fall.

You loved him, upheld him,
This child of thy breast,
And now give him surcease
In dreamings and rest.

Thy note was the one note
He heard in the fray,
That bore him far out
In the heat of the day;

Thy call is the one call
That beckons him home,
When day-fires darken
By forest and foam.

When o'er all the heartache,
The visions untrue,
Love draws her dim curtains
Of duskfire and dew.

While the bells ring for slumber
As out of the deep,
Come pleading those velvet-winged
Spirits of sleep.

And there at thy doorways
Of slumber he stands,
Like him of old Horeb,
And sees his heart's lands;

And under the white awe
Of planets that swim,
Knows dawning and even
As one world to him.

To the Ottawa

OUT of the northern wastes, lands of winter and death,
Regions of ruin and age, spaces of solitude lost;
You wash and thunder and sweep,
And dream and sparkle and creep,
Turbulent, luminous, large,
Scion of thunder and frost.

Down past woodland and waste, lone as the haunting of even,
Of shrivelled and wind-moaning night when Winter hath wizened the world;
Down past hamlet and town
By marshes, by forests that frown,
Brimming their desolate banks,
Your tides to the ocean are hurled.

Departure

OLD house now ruined, wrecked and gray,
Home once enshrined of love's delight
And all glad promise of the May,
Now hushed in shades of wintry night, —

Once garment of a thousand loves,
Now but a shroud of glooming stone, —
While sad October moans and roves,
Old house, old house, we are alone!

We are alone; yea, you and I,
Who dreamed old summers in their prime;
Now sad and late, to see them die
Along this ruined verge of time.

Old rooms now empty, once so bright, —
Staircases climbed of gladdening feet,
Dark windows erstwhile filled with light
Where now but rains of autumn beat: —

Where now but lorn months call and call
And sea and gust and night complain, —

With ghost-boughs shadowing on the wall,
Or dead vines knocking at the pane.

Old place, whose ceilings, walls and floors
Still redolent of love and May;
Once more, once more I leave your doors,
Into the night I take my way.

Huge yawning hearths, once flaming bright
On many a well-loved face and form
Long gathered out unto the night
To meet the vastness and the storm, —

Into the night; where I, too, go,
Beyond your sheltering walls and doors;
Where death's October drives his woe
Over a thousand midnight moors,

Beyond your sheltering, where I beat
To sleep with stars of dark o'ergleamed,
Or breast the night of moan and sleet
To meet that morn a world hath dreamed.

Hath dreamed? Hope-hungering heart hath read,
And carolled morning-lifted lark!
Yea, back of all this muffled dread
Perchance some splendor rifts the dark.

Yea, though no magic reach its gleams,
Nor heart of doubting prove it true,
Old house, beloved, of my dead dreams,
While I go forth from love and you.

Phaethon

I PHAETHON: dwelling in that golden house,
Which Hephaistos did build for my great sire,
Old Helios, king of glowing heaven and day;
Knowing this life but mortal in its span,
Hedged in by puling youth and palsied age,
Where poor men crawl like insects, knowing pain
And mighty sorrow to the gates of death;
Besought the god my father by his love,
To grant me that which I did long for most
Of all things great in earth and heaven and sea,
The which he granting in his mighty love, —
Of all things splendid under the splendid sky
Built of old by toil of ancient gods,
To me the dearest; for one round golden day,
To stand in his great chariot built of fire,
And chase the rosy hours from dawn to dusk,
Guiding his fleeting steeds o'er heaven's floors.
He gave to me. — No god yet brake his word. —
Speaking to me in sorrow: "O my son,
Know what thy foolish pride hath made for thee.
That mortal life which is to men a span,
From childhood unto youth, and manhood's prime,

Reaching on out to happy olden age,
For thee must shrink into one woeful day.
For, O my son, impetuous in thy pride,
Who would be as the gods and ape their ways,
And sacrilegious leave thy mortal bounds, —
Know thou must die upon that baleful day,
That terrible day of days thou mountest up
To ride that chariot never mortal rode,
And drive those steeds that never man hath driven.
Then I : " My father, know me, thine own son,
Better to me to live one day a god,
Going out in some great flame of death,
Than live this weary life of common men,
Misunderstood, misunderstanding still,
Half wakeful, moving dimly in a dream,
Confused, phantasmic, men call history ;
Chasing the circles of the perishing suns,
The summers and dim winters, hating all,
Heart-eaten for a longing ne'er attained,
Despising all things named of earth or heaven,
Or mortal birth that they should ever be ;
Knowing within this mystery of my being,
This curbed heredity, lies a latent dream
Of some old vanished, banished, lease of being,
When life was life and man's soul lived its hour,
Uncurbed, uncabined, like the mighty gods,
Vast, splendid, capable, and heraclean,

To drain the golden beaker of his days."
Thus I: "My father, I am over weary,
Chained in this summer-plot of circumstance,
Beaten by fearful custom, childish, chidden,
Hounded of cruel wolves of superstition,
And rounded by a petty wall of time,
Plodding the dreary years that wend their round,
Aping the sleeping sensual life of beasts,
Fearful of all things, dreading mostly death,
Past pain and age and all their miseried end,
Where all must rot, who smile and weep and sleep,
And be a part of all this grim corruption.
Nay, better to me than the long-measured draught,
Trickling out through many anxious years,
Iron-eaten, haggard, to the place of death —
To drain my flagon of life in one glad draught, —
To live, to love, aspire, and dare all things;
Be all I am and others ought to be,
Real man or demi-god, to blossom my rose,
To scale my heights, to live my vastest dream,
To climb, to be, and then, if chance my fate,
To greatly fall.
Then my great father, laden
With woe divine: "My son, take thou thy way;
As thou hast chosen, thus 't will be to thee;"
And passing, darkened down his godlike face,
And shadowed splendor thence forevermore.

'T was night ambrosial down the orient meads,
With stars like winking pearls far-studding heaven,
And dews all glorious on the bending stem,
Odorous, passionate as the rose of sleep
Half-budded on the throbbing heart of night,
And in the east a glowing sapphire gloomed;
When I awoke and lifted up mine eyes,
And saw through rose and gold and vermeil dyes,
And splendid mists of azure hung with pearl,
Half-hid, half-seen, as life would apprehend,
As in a sleep, the presence of dim death
And fate and terrible gods, the car of day.

Like morn within the morning, glad, it hung,
Light hid in light, swift blinding all who saw,
Dazzled, its presence; motionless though vibrate,
Where it did swing athwart the deep-welled night,
The heart of morning in the folds of dark,
Pulsating sleep, and conquering death with life;
So glowed its glory, folded, cloud in cloud,
Gold within azure, purple shut in gold,
The bud of morning pulsing ere it break,
And spill its splendors many vermeil-dyed,
Reddening Ocean to his outmost rim.

Here charmèd dreams and drowsèd magic hung,
And wingèd hopes and rosy joys afloat

Filled all the air, and I was quick aware
That this was life, and this mine hour supreme,
To seize and act and be one with the gods.
So dreamed I reckless when to think, to act,
And moved, elate, with swift life-flaming step
Athwart the meadow's budding asphodels,
Song on my lip, and life at heart and eye,
Exultant, breathing flame of pride and power.

Joy rose and sang, a bird, across the fields,
Hope's rosy wings shot trembling to the blue,
And Courage with dauntless steps before me went,
Brushing the veils of fierce cobwebby fires.
And there, before me, sprawled grim ancient Power,
A hideous ethiope, huge in sodden sleep,
The golden reins clutched in his titan hands.
I snatched, leaped, shouted; morning rose in flame,
And ashweed paled to lily, lily blushed
To ruddy crocus, crocus flamed to rose,
And out of all, borne on the floors of light,
I floated, gloried, up the orient walls,
And all things woke, and sang of conquering day.

Higher, yet higher, out of fiery mists,
Filling those meadows of the dew-built dawn,
Gloried and glorying, power clutched in my hand,
Wreathed about in terrible splendors, I drave,

Glowing, the dawn's gold coursers, champing steam
Of snow and pearly foam from golden bridles,
Forged in blue eidolon forges of the night,
Beaten on steely anvils of the stars.
These, champing, reared their fetlocks; breathing flame,
In red, dew-draining lances, thundered on,
'Whelming night, as golden stair by stair
They climbed the glimmering bridgeway of the day.
Far under, wreathed in mists, old ocean swayed;
And, cyclops-like, the bearded mountains hung.
Vast shining rivers with their brimming floors
And broad curved courses gleamed and glanced and shone,
And loneliness and gloom and gray despair
With sombre hauntings fled to shuddering night
Hidden in caves and coral glooms of seas.

Low down the east the morn's ambrosial meads
Sank in soft splendors. Sphering out below,
Gilded in morning, anchored the patient earth,
Mountain and valley, ocean and wide plain,
Opening to dawn's young footsteps where we wheeled,
And blossomed wide the rosebud of the day.
Glory was mine, but greater, sense of power,

Nor marred by fear, as loftier we climbed,
With glinting hoofs, that clanged the azure bridge
That arched from dawning up to flaming noon.
Dauntless my soul, and fiery-glad my heart,
And "vastness," "vastness," sang through all my being,
As gloved with adamant I guided on
The day's red coursers up their flaming hill,
To reach the mighty keystone of the day.

All things conspired to build my upward road:
The fitful winds of morning, the soft clouds,
That fleece-like swept my cheek, the azure glint
Of ocean swaying, restless, on his rim,
Where slept the continents like a serpent curled
In sleep, leviathan, huge, about the world.

Then sudden all my waking turned to dream,
A madness wherein, hideous, all things hung.
Thought fled confused, and awful apprehension
Shadowed my spirit, power and reason fled;
And, maddening, day's red coursers thundered on,
Uncurbed, unguided by my palsied hand.
Then with loud ruin, blundering from the bridge,
Through space went swaying, now high up, now down,

Scattering conflagration and fierce death
O'er earth's shrunk verges where their scorchings
scarred.

Time fled in terror, forests shrivelled up,
Ocean drew back in shudderings to his caves,
Huge mountains shook and rumbled to their base,
Great streams dried up, old cities smoked and fell,
And all life met confusion and despair,
And dread annihilation.
Then the Gods,
Pitying wrecked nature, in their sudden vengeance,
Me, impious, hurled from out my dizzying height.
Time vanished, reason swooned, then left her
throne,
And darkness wrapt me as I shuddering fell,
Oblivion-clouded, to the plunging seas.
Ocean received me, folding in her deeps,
Cooling and emerald. Here in coral dreams
I rest and cure me, never wholly waking,
Filled with one splendor, fumbling in a dream,
As waves do fumble all about a cave,
For one clear memory of that one high day.

I failed, was mortal; where I climbed I fell.
But all else little matters; life was mine,
I dreamed, I dared, I grappled with, I fell;

And here I live it over in my dreams.
All things may pass, decline, and come to naught,
Death 'whelm life as day engulfed in dark,
But I have greatly lived, have greatly dared,
And death will never wholly wrap me round
And black me in its terrors. I am made
One with the future, dwelling in the dreams
And memories dread of envious gods and men.

The Humming Bee

GLAD music of the summer's heart,
Jargoning from flower to flower,
A part of each unconscious hour
Until the happy days depart!

Thou dream-like toiler of the fields!
Each honeyed spot thou knowest well
Where Nature's heart her sweetness yields,
Some ruined trunk thy citadel;
There buildest a home for Winter's hour
In some lone, sunlight-haunted place,
When all the year is at its power,
And June's high-tide on bank and bower
Mirrors in blossoms Nature's face.

At early morn by breathing wood,
Or in some dewy clover dell,
Tuning the young day's solitude,—
Or down the slumbrous afternoon,
Rich-freighted, wingest thy tuneful way,
Self-musing, murmurous, musical;

Amid the whole world's dreamy swoon,
  Sole voice of all the drowsèd day,
Until the gradual shadows fall : —
  Then, by some lonely pasture-fell
At ruddy eve when homeward come
Past deepening shade or fading ray
The weary children of the day.
  I hear thy joyous, drowsy hum,
Till stars peep out and woods breathe low,
  And sounds of human toil grow dumb,
And Night, the blessèd, comes apace,
Bending to Earth's her cooling face,
  While airs across the dark outblow:
Then rocked on some glad blossom's breast,
  Thou dreamest to rest.

When Summer wanes to Autumn's age,
And come the days of fate and rage,
  O happy Humming Bee!
Then wilt thou sink to wintry sleep,
When storms are hoarse along the deep,
  In hushed tranquillity.
No more wilt wind thy subtle horn
By dreamy eve or misty morn,
When trees are leafless, pastures shorn.
  Ah me! ah me!
Could we, like thee, go down the days

Of summer hush to autumn haze.
Housing, with what we built before,
The gold of all our memory's store
And garnered thought;
So when the bleak December's hate
Beat round the bastions of our fate,
We, wrapt in wealth of honeyed dreams
Of kindlier visions, far-off streams,
Might heed it not.

The Children of the Foam

OUT forever and forever,
Where our tresses glint and shiver
On the icy moonlit air;
Come we from a land of gloaming,
Children lost, forever homing,
Never, never reaching there;
Ride we, ride we, ever faster,
Driven by our demon master,
The wild wind in his despair;
Ride we, ride we, ever home,
Wan, white children of the foam.

In the wild October dawning,
When the heaven's angry awning
Leans to lakeward, bleak and drear;
And along the black, wet ledges,
Under icy, caverned edges,
Breaks the lake in maddened fear;
And the woods in shore are moaning;
Then you hear our weird intoning,
Mad, late children of the year;

Ride we, ride we, ever home,
Lost, white children of the foam.

All gray day, the black sky under,
Where the beaches moan and thunder,
  Where the breakers spume and comb,
You may hear our riding, riding,
You may hear our voices chiding,
  Under glimmer, under gloam;
Like a far-off infant wailing,
You may hear our hailing, hailing,
  For the voices of our home;
Ride we, ride we, ever home,
Haunted children of the foam.

And at midnight, when the glimmer
Of the moon grows dank and dimmer,
  Then we lift our gleaming eyes;
Then you see our white arms tossing,
Our wan breasts the moon embossing,
  Under gloom of lake and skies;
You may hear our mournful chanting,
And our voices haunting, haunting,
  Through the night's mad melodies;
Riding, riding, ever home,
Wild, white children of the foam.

There, forever and forever,
Will no demon-hate dissever
  Peace and sleep and rest and dream;
There is neither fear nor fret there
When the tired children get there,
  Only dews and pallid beam
Fall in gentle peace and sadness
Over long surcease of madness,
  From hushed skies that gleam and gleam:
In the longed-for, sought-for home
Of the children of the foam.

There the streets are hushed and restful,
And of dreams is every breast full,
  With the sleep that tired eyes wear;
There the city hath long quiet
From the madness and the riot,
  From the failing hearts of care;
Balm of peacefulness ingliding,
Dream we through our riding, riding,
  As we homeward, homeward fare;
Riding, riding, ever home,
Wild, white children of the foam.

Under pallid moonlight beaming,
Under stars of midnight gleaming,
  And the ebon arch of night;

Round the rosy edge of morning,
You may hear our distant horning,
  You may mark our phantom flight;
Riding, riding, ever faster,
Driven by our demon master,
  Under darkness, under light;
Ride we, ride we, ever home,
Wild, white children of the foam.

How One Winter Came

IN THE LAKE REGION

FOR weeks and weeks the autumn world stood still,
Clothed in the shadow of a smoky haze;
The fields were dead, the wind had lost its will,
And all the lands were hushed by wood and hill,
In those gray, withered days.

Behind a mist the blear sun rose and set,
At night the moon would nestle in a cloud;
The fisherman, a ghost, did cast his net;
The lake its shores forgot to chafe and fret,
And hushed its caverns loud.

Far in the smoky woods the birds were mute,
Save that from blackened tree a jay would scream,
Or far in swamps the lizard's lonesome lute
Would pipe in thirst, or by some gnarlèd root
The tree-toad trilled his dream.

From day to day still hushed the season's mood,
The streams stayed in their runnels shrunk and dry;
Suns rose aghast by wave and shore and wood,
And all the world, with ominous silence, stood
In weird expectancy:

When one strange night the sun like blood went down,
Flooding the heavens in a ruddy hue;
Red grew the lake, the sere fields parched and brown,
Red grew the marshes where the creeks stole down,
But never a wind-breath blew.

That night I felt the winter in my veins,
A joyous tremor of the icy glow;
And woke to hear the north's wild vibrant strains,
While far and wide, by withered woods and plains,
Fast fell the driving snow.

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